

A message to our members — 2026

You care about Lake Gogebic. So do we. That's why we want to be honest with you about where the LGIA stands, and ask for your voice in shaping what comes next.

What we've accomplished together

The LGIA has been protecting Lake Gogebic for years — monitoring water quality, building fish cribs, restoring habitat, and keeping our lake community informed. Thanks to careful stewardship, we maintain an active 501(c)(3) status and over \$13,000 in funds, including a CD, and a pontoon boat. Programs like the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program (CLMP) and our fish crib projects are real, ongoing work making a real difference.

What's been hard

We won't sugarcoat it: the LGIA has been running on a small group of dedicated volunteers who are stretched thin. We've missed board quorum at 6 of our last 10 meetings — meaning we often can't officially act, vote, or move forward on important matters. Two related problems drive this: our board size, as defined in the bylaws in 1995, is now larger than our pool of active volunteers can fill, and our full quorum requirement — currently set at one-third of all members — is nearly impossible to meet in practice. Finally, there is no clear way for interested members to pitch in short of joining the full board.

This isn't a failure — it's a sign that our structure needs to catch up with our community. Many of you want to be involved but haven't had a clear path in. We'd like to change that.

What we're proposing

We are proposing three interconnected changes, all within our existing bylaw authority:

1. Right-size the board and fix the quorum requirement

Two bylaw changes work together here. First, we propose reducing the defined board size so it reflects the number of volunteers who are genuinely active — a board that looks full on paper but operates with empty seats makes quorum harder to reach and creates a false picture of our capacity. Second, we propose amending the quorum requirement from one-third of all members to a fixed number (around 7 members), so that engaged participants can conduct business reliably. Simultaneously, we will begin actively using proxy voting — already permitted under Article VI, Section 7 — by including a proxy form with every meeting notice.

2. Create a committee-driven structure

Rather than requiring full board service, we'd like to create focused committees that any member can join. Under Article VII, Section 17, the board can create committees that include non-director members. Proposed committees include:

- Water quality monitoring (CLMP) — data drives project priorities
- Lake projects — level monitoring, fish cribs, shoreline work, habitat restoration
- Invasive species education, identification, eradication
- Grants — research funding opportunities, write and submit applications
- Communications — quarterly newsletter, social media, stakeholder updates

This gives everyone a meaningful way to contribute without the full commitment of a board seat.

3. Reconsider member dues

With our current financial reserves, the LGIA can operate without dues revenue. We're exploring whether to eliminate or reduce annual dues so that membership becomes a community affiliation — not a financial transaction. This change requires a member vote at the July annual meeting.

All three changes are within our existing bylaw authority. The July annual meeting is where members vote. Your input now helps shape what we bring to that meeting.